Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Commission
Vehicle Inspections: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Vehicle Markings

Q. **What markings must appear on my vehicles?**

A. Unless a vehicle is exempt from marking requirements (see below), a carrier's legal name or approved trade name must appear on each vehicle, as well as the WMATC number assigned to the carrier.

Q. **How do I know whether to display a legal name or trade name?**

A. If a carrier has a WMATC-approved trade name, it may choose to display either its legal name or its trade name. If a carrier does not have a trade name, it must display its legal name.

Q. **Where should the markings be placed?**

A. Markings must be displayed on both the passenger and driver's side of each vehicle. Most carriers place their WMATC number on the front door, behind the rear tire, or on the front fender of their vehicle. Carriers can select the spot on their vehicle where they place their legal name (or trade name), but it must appear somewhere on both the passenger and driver's side.

Q. **How large must the vehicle markings be?**

A. Each individual letter and number of the required vehicle markings must: 1) contrast sharply with the background paint, 2) underline measure at least 2½" in height, and 3) be permanent.

Q. **Can my vehicle markings be displayed on removable magnetic signs?**

A. No. Removable magnetic signs are not allowed, except in rare circumstances involving vehicles in temporary use that have been previously reported to the Commission.

Q. **Could I see an example of vehicle markings that comply with Commission Regulation No. 61?**

A.   ROYAL TRANSPORTATION, INC.
              WMATC 3234

If a name other than the carrier's legal name or WMATC-approved trade name appears on the vehicle, the markings must clearly identify the carrier that operates the vehicle. For example:

AJAX HOTEL

OPERATED BY NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION, LLC
WMATC 3359

Q. **Are markings required on limousines and luxury sedans?**

A. Limousines and luxury sedans seating 9 persons or less, including the driver, do not need to display a name or WMATC number. Limousines and luxury sedans seating 10-15 persons, including the driver, do not need to display a name but must still display a WMATC number. If a carrier's vehicle falls within these categories and does not display markings, carriers should submit a waiver letter request form to WMATC. A WMATC markings waiver letter should be kept in the vehicle at all times so it can be presented to law enforcement personnel.

Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Commission
Vehicle Inspections: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Vehicle Registration and Inspections

Q. Who must register the vehicle?

A. Each vehicle should be registered in the name of the carrier, as it will appear on the Certificate of Authority. If a vehicle is registered to someone other than the carrier, you must also file a copy of a signed vehicle lease. The Commission accepts most third-party leases, or you can download the Commission's vehicle lease form from the WMATC website.

Q. What if applicant's vehicle is not registered "for-hire?"

A. You must first re-register the vehicle "for-hire" in the name of applicant (or the lessor) and submit a copy of the new registration card to the Commission before scheduling your vehicle inspection. In the District of Columbia, this generally means you must have B-tags or L tags. In Maryland, you must generally have P-tags or B-tags. In Virginia, you must generally have H-tags. License plates must be firmly affixed to the front and back of the vehicle at the time of inspection. Temporary and personal tags are not acceptable.

Q. How do I show that my vehicle complies with applicable safety inspection requirements?

A. Each vehicle registered in Virginia or the District of Columbia must display a current, valid safety inspection sticker on its windshield from an authorized local inspection station. If the vehicle is registered in Maryland, you must provide a copy of the paper vehicle inspection certificate you received from the local inspection station. The inspection must have occurred within the previous 365 days.

Q. How do I present my vehicle for WMATC inspection?

A. Once you have filed: 1) a vehicle list; 2) for-hire registration card(s); and 3) a current safety inspection certificate for each vehicle registered in Maryland, call (301) 588-5260 to schedule an inspection time. Inspections must typically be scheduled about one week in advance. WMATC will not conduct vehicle inspections without an appointment. Vehicle inspections are conducted near the blue awning in front of the WMATC office building, located at 8701 Georgia Avenue, Suite 808, Silver Spring, Maryland. Once you have arrived at the inspection site, call the WMATC office to notify staff of your arrival.

Q. What will the inspectors look for during the WMATC inspection?

A. WMATC inspectors will determine the seating capacity of the vehicle and examine the vehicle markings, license plates, registration card, safety inspection decals, and VIN number. A copy of the vehicle registration card must be inside the vehicle at the time of inspection and the VIN number displayed on the driver's side dashboard must remain uncovered so it is visible from outside of the vehicle. Inspectors will also examine the vehicle's horn, tires, seat belts, mirrors, windshield wipers and washers, headlights, brake lights, and turn signals to be sure they are functioning properly. If a vehicle is equipped with a wheelchair lift or ramp, the inspector will confirm these items and any tie-downs function properly in conformance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Q. Are there any additional requirements for vehicles seating 9 or more persons?

A. If a vehicle's seating capacity, including the driver, is 9 or greater, the inspector will also check to ensure the required emergency equipment (fire extinguisher and warning triangles/flares) are inside the vehicle.

Q. Can I have passengers aboard the vehicle at the time of inspection?

A. No. Commission staff will not inspect a vehicle that has passengers aboard.